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FM AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7999
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0904
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 NICOSIA 000596

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [ETRN](#) [CY](#)

SUBJECT: CYPRUS'S FOUR NEW CABINET MINISTERS SWORN IN

REF: NICOSIA 579

(U) This cable is sensitive but unclassified. Please protect accordingly.

BACKGROUND

1. (SBU) GOC President Tassos Papadopoulos announced July 13 the appointment of four new ministers (including the first woman Foreign Minister, career diplomat Erato Kozakou-Marcoullis) to serve for the remaining seven months of the current administration. The four replace the communist AKEL ministers who resigned en masse on July 11 following AKEL's decision to support party leader Demetris Christofias (instead of Papadopoulos) in the February 2008 presidential elections (reftel). The new cabinet members were sworn in on July 16 and, besides Kozakou-Marcoullis, include relative unknowns Christos Patsalides as Minister of Interior, Maria Malahtou-Pamballi as Minister of Communications and Works, and Costas Kadis as Minister of Health. Please see below biographic information on all four new ministers, as well as contact information for the new Foreign Minister.

Bio & Comment: Kozakou-Marcoullis

2. (U) Erato Kozakou-Marcoullis, Cyprus's new Minister of Foreign Affairs, was born on August 3, 1949, in Limassol. She graduated in 1975 from the University of Athens, Greece, with degrees in Law and in Public Law and Political Science. She did post graduate studies at the University of Helsinki, Finland, and obtained a Ph.D. in Sociology and Political Science in 1979. She served in the Permanent Mission of Cyprus to the United Nations from 1980 to 1988.

She returned to Nicosia in 1989 and served in the Cyprus Question Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs until 1993. From 1993 to 1996, she served as Director of the Office of the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Kozakou-Marcoullis

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next served as Ambassador to Sweden (also accredited to Finland, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) from 1996 to 1998, and then as Ambassador to the United States starting in September 1998 (also accredited as High Commissioner of Cyprus to Canada, Guyana and Jamaica, and as Ambassador to Brazil). She returned to Nicosia from the U.S. in September 2003 to head the Cyprus Question Division of the Ministry. She has been, concurrently, accredited as Ambassador to Lebanon and Jordan. Ambassador Marcoullis is fluent in Greek and English and can speak some French, Finnish, and Russian. She is married to oncologist Dr. George Marcoullis, and has one son, Panos Marcoullis; her husband and son are American citizens.

3. (SBU) Contact information:

Name: Erato Kozakou-Marcoullis
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14. (SBU) Kozakou-Marcoullis's appointment as Foreign Minister was welcomed by pro-government and opposition parties alike because she enjoys a reputation as a capable and accomplished diplomat. She is Cyprus's first woman Foreign Minister. In her previous position as Director of the Cyprus Question Division, she has shown a keen interest in both U.S. and EU foreign assistance programs, consistently attempting to assert GOC authority over them. The other three new ministers are relative unknowns, and include a second woman and two young academics. According to Embassy contacts, Papadopoulos appointed these four new ministers on the advice of his Athens-based campaign communications experts; he aims to appeal to the female and youth votes. However, Papadopoulos overlooked names recommended by his coalition partners DIKO and EDEK, which wanted a stronger presence in the administration after AKEL's departure. Seemingly deaf to this loss, Papadopoulos could be treading on thin ice by ignoring his two remaining partners. How well these appointments play politically remains to be seen.

Bio: Patsalides

15. (U) Dr. Christos Patsalides, the new Minister of Interior, was born in Paphos in 1972. He studied at Hull University in the UK from 1993 to 2000, and has a Ph.D. in EU Law, an M.Phil. in Law and a Law Degree. From September 2005 to present, Patsalides has been the Director of the Foundation of European Social and Political Studies and an Assistant Professor of EU Law at Cyprus College in Nicosia, serving as department chair of social sciences from 2003 to

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Bio: Malahtou-Pamballi

16. (U) Maria Malahtou-Pamballi, the new Minister of Communications and Works, was born in Limassol in 1961. In 1982, she graduated from the University of Kent at Canterbury with a Bachelor of Arts, with Honors. She continued her studies at the University of London, where she graduated in 1983 with a Master of Law, specializing in maritime and corporate law. Malahtou-Pamballi is a registered attorney and has practiced law in Cyprus since 1984. She worked in private law offices in Limassol from 1984 to 1990, after which she was appointed as an attorney with the Attorney General's Office. From 2001 to present, she held the position of Senior Attorney of the Republic. She resides in Limassol and is married to Costas Pamballis, President of the Limassol District Court. She has two daughters.

Bio: Kadis

17. (U) Dr. Costas Kadis, the new Minister of Health, was born in Nicosia in 1967. He studied Biology at the University of Athens, where he received his degree in 1991. He continued his studies at the University of Athens, receiving a Ph.D. in Biology Sciences, with Honors, in 1995. After attending some teaching courses at Cornell University, he returned to Cyprus in 1996 to work as a Scientific Consultant at the Enalion Center of Environmental Management, owned by the Cyprus Development Bank. In 1998, he was appointed as Officer at the Research Promotion Institute. He remained with the Institute until 2005, when he was appointed Head of the Research Department at the Frederick Institute of Technology. Also in 2005, he founded the Nature Conservation Unit, which has received funding from the European Union, the United Nations, the

Research Promotion Institute, and the Government of Cyprus, undertaking 12 research programs. Kadis has published several articles in international scientific magazines and written several environmental surveys. He is a member of many scientific committees in Cyprus and abroad on natural environment and research issues. Kadis is married to Marina Michaelidou-Kadi and has a daughter named Sofia.

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